**Beginner Track: Food Deserts in the United States**

Over 17 million1 Americans live in areas classified as a food desert, low-income areas where it is difficult for residents to have access to fresh and healthy food. In these areas, residents are forced to choose between eating convenient and unhealthy fast food or driving for hours to the nearest grocery store to buy fresh produce, leaving many families trapped in cycles of poor nutrition and deteriorating health.

To combat these issues, the USDA has hired your team of data scientists to analyze the **USDA Food Research Atlas (FoodAccessResearchAtlasData2019.csv)**, a dataset describing supermarket accessibility in the United States for census tracts across the country. In conjunction with the Food Research Atlas, your group has also been given the **USDA’s Food Environment Atlas (FoodEnvironmentAtlas.xls)**, a county-level dataset describing the social, economic, and health-related factors that influence and are influenced by food environments, such as obesity rate. Using these two datasets, your group has been tasked to find key indicators that may correlate with the inaccessibility of healthy and nutritious food, and provide policy recommendations at the national level, which look to address and reduce the existence of these deserts.

**Resources**:

1. Information on the Food Research Atlas has been provided by the USDA here: <https://www.ers.usda.gov/data-products/food-access-research-atlas/documentation/>

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